

Message

From: Cisar, Elizabeth [Cisar.Elizabeth@epa.gov]
Sent: 10/7/2021 12:31:33 PM
To: Fox, Radhika [Fox.Radhika@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: Benton Harbor update
Attachments: 09.22.21_Administrator Briefing Memo Benton Harbor.docx

I don't have your talking points. Here is the briefing memo.

Elizabeth Cisar

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From: Fox, Radhika <Fox.Radhika@epa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 7, 2021 8:27 AM
To: Cisar, Elizabeth <Cisar.Elizabeth@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Benton Harbor update

Did I ever send you the TPS I did for the briefing for the Administrator? I can't find them. Can you send me the memo we did? I need some of the higher level points which I can grab from that

From: Cisar, Elizabeth <Cisar.Elizabeth@epa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 7, 2021 8:20 AM
To: Fox, Radhika <Fox.Radhika@epa.gov>; Newton, Cheryl <Newton.Cheryl@epa.gov>
Cc: Fong, Tera <Fong.Tera@epa.gov>
Subject: RE: Benton Harbor update

Here you go:

1. Michigan began delivering bottled water on 10/1 and continues to deliver it through three local organizations: Southwest Michigan Community Action Agency, and two local churches. One of the churches is the congregation of Reverend Edward Pinckney, one of the petitioners. Michigan is no longer stating that it will stop water delivery by a date certain.
2. Michigan established an Incident Command Structure to coordinate response in BH. Region 5 staff are participating in the ICS to stay informed and provide input.
3. EPA is providing oversight of the water distribution process. We sent an On-Scene Coordinator CIC last week to observe the water distribution and check in with community members to ensure the message about the water delivery is getting out. We have 2 Community Involvement Coordinators part of the ICS and continuing engagement.
4. Michigan and EPA are now evaluating the potential gaps in water distribution. MDHHS is planning to make calls to ensure people who cannot pick up water themselves can have water delivered.
5. ORD and Region 5 are also working with MDHHS and EGLE to get the data EPA needs to help inform both the filter distribution plan and a study to confirm that water filters will work effectively in Benton Harbor.
6. Water filters are effective at reducing lead when they are properly installed and maintained. Because of some issues with filter performance in Newark and concerns raised by petitioners, out of an abundance of caution, EPA is developing a filter study to confirm that water filters will perform effectively in Benton Harbor. EPA staff have conducted a literature review and gathered all available data on water quality, water chemistry, and sampling results in Benton Harbor. MDHHS and EGLE have been working well with us to provide that data. ORD, Region 5, and OGWDW staff met yesterday to review the data and begin scoping the filter study. We hope to have a plan to recommend by the end of next week.

Ex. 5 Deliberative Process (DP)

10. OW will be in communication with petitioners today to share the information about the filter study. Several petitioners expressed interest in meeting with EPA and EGLE to discuss the filter study plan. We hope to set up with them next week.
11. Region 5 is also working with EGLE and MDHHS to review the public education materials being developed for BH residents about lead in water, relying on bottled water, and using filters. With EPA's statement on filter effectiveness, we expect MI to work expeditiously on the filter distribution/door-to-door education campaign.
12. It will be important for MI to hear regularly from headquarters that (a) there should be no further public statements about EPA's activities not cleared by EPA; (b) EGLE and MDHHS must work closely with Region 5 on developing public education materials and the public education and filter distribution plans.

Let us know if you have questions or would like more information.

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Phone: (202)-564-4382; Cell: Ex. 6 Personal Privacy (PP)

From: Fox, Radhika <Fox.Radhika@epa.gov>

Sent: Thursday, October 7, 2021 6:51 AM

To: Cisar, Elizabeth <Cisar.Elizabeth@epa.gov>; Newton, Cheryl <Newton.Cheryl@epa.gov>

Subject: Benton Harbor update

Good morning – the Administrator is talking to Senator Stabenow later today. It's on a different topic but I want to give him an update on Benton Harbor. I know there are a lot of email updates that have been shared. Could I please get the best one (it can be brief) by 815 or 830? I want to give it to Dan before his 830am with him if possible. Also, the Administrator is calling me on something else at 9am and I can verbally walk through it. If this isn't possible I can do it verbally as Elizabeth updated me yesterday

Radhika Fox

Assistant Administrator for Water

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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